

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-14

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DRAFTED BY EA/ROC:JWMOYLE:JW

APPROVED BY EA:HHBARGER

EA/ROC:RWSULLIVAN

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TAIPEI PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 211720

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRD, OVIP, TW. J, KS

SUBJECT: WASHINGTON VISIT OF WONG YI-TING

1. SUMMARY. WONG YI-TING, DIRECTOR OF ROC BOARD OF FOREIGN TRADE, CALLED ON DEPARTMENT AND COMMERCE OFFICIALS, INCLUDING SECRETARY DENT, OCTOBER 23-24. WONG PRIMARILY INTERESTED IN OBTAINING LARGER ROC IMPORTS OF IRON AND STEEL SCRAP. COMMERCE HAS AGREED TO ASSIST ON SOME ASPECTS OF QUESTION. WONG INDICATED ROC WILLING TO UNDERTAKE DISCUSSIONS ON MUSHROOMS SOON, PERHAPS BY MID-NOVEMBER IN TAIPEI. EA DEPUTY ASST. SECRETARY BARGER RAISED QUESTION OF REDUCING WIDENING US/ROC TRADE IMBALANCE. WONG SAID ROC WORKING ON PROBLEM. BARGER ALSO NOTED THAT OPIC COVERAGE FOR US FIRMS ON TAIWAN MAY BE INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN FOR SOME NEW PROJECTS PARTICULARLY IN

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ELECTRONICS FIELD. END SUMMARY.

2. SCRAP. WONG NOTED IN CALLS ON DEPARTMENT AND COMMERCE OFFICIALS THAT ROC TOTALLY DEPENDENT ON IMPORTED IRON AND STEEL SCRAP FOR ITS STEEL INDUSTRY AND THAT INDUSTRY SORELY AFFECTED BY US SCRAP EMBARGO. WONG NOTED THAT ROC HAD

LICENSE EXPORT ORDERS FOR 660,000 METRIC TONS OF SCRAP WHEN EMBARGO ANNOUNCED. HOWEVER, ROC WILL ONLY BE ABLE TO SHIP ABOUT 280,000 METRIC TONS BEFORE LICENSES EXPIRE AT END OF CALENDAR YEAR. WONG REQUESTED THAT VALIDITY OF LICENSES BE EXTENDED TO END OF MARCH OR APRIL 1974. HE ALSO REQUESTED THAT ROC BE GIVEN SPECIAL CONSIDERATION IN ALLOTMENT OF 1974 SCRAP EXPORT ALLOCATIONS.

3. SECRETARY DENT TOLD WONG THAT USG WOULD DO ITS BEST TO MEET ROC REQUEST ON EXTENSION OF 1973 EXPORT LICENSES. FYI. COMMERCE WILL PROBABLY ISSUE RENEWABLE 30-DAY EXTENSIONS ON EXISTING LICENSES. END FYI. REGARDING 1974 SCRAP ALLOCATIONS, DENT SAID USG WOULD KEEP ROC REQUEST IN MIND AS WELL AS ITS PARTICULAR CONCERNS.

4. TRADE CENTER/CONTRACTS. SECRETARY DENT ALSO DREW WONG'S ATTENTION TO US/ROC TRADE IMBALANCE AND EXPRESSED HOPE THAT NEW TRADE CENTER AND AWARD OF MAJOR CONTRACTS TO US BIDDERS WOULD DO MUCH TO REDUCE GAP.

5. MUSHROOMS. WONG INDICATED ROC WILLING TO UNDERTAKE DISCUSSIONS IN TAIPEI SOON, PERHAPS BY MID-NOVEMBER. SEPTTEL FOLLOWS.

6. TRADE IMBALANCE. EA DEPUTY ASST. SECRETARY BARGER EXPRESSED APPRECIATION TO WONG FOR SUCCESS OF ROC BUYING MISSION LAST SPRING BUT NOTED THAT US/ROC TRADE IMBALANCE HAS CONTINUED TO GROW UNLIKE OTHER ASIAN COUNTRIES SUCH AS KOREA AND JAPAN. WONG RESPONDED THAT ROC IMPORTS FROM US RISING MUCH MORE RAPIDLY THAN ROC EXPORTS TO US EVEN THOUGH ABSOLUTE GAP STILL INCREASING. HE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT GAP WILL EVENTUALLY DECREASE. HE NOTED THAT ROC CONSIDERING SOME MEASURES, SUCH AS TARIFF REDUCTIONS, WHICH MIGHT YIELD INCREASED US IMPORTS. MR. BARGER SAID CONFIDENTIAL

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HE HOPED ROC COULD PROVIDE USG WITH LIST OF MEASURES TAKEN TO REDUCE TRADE IMBALANCE.

7. ASKED ABOUT INCREASING IMPORTS OF US TOBACCO AND ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, WONG EXPRESSED LITTLE OPTIMISM. HE EXPRESSED HOPE HOWEVER THAT IMPORTS OF OTHER TYPES OF COMMODITIES COULD BE SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASED AND CITED RECENT SUCCESS STORY OF RCA COLOR TELEVISION IMPORTS.

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